

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSC-07 NSCE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 L-02

PRS-01 MC-02 /051 R

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DRAFTED BY EUR/WE:EJBEIGEL:VE

APPROVED BY EUR/WE:RDVINE

OSD/DSAA: M.MACDONALD

PM/ISP: J.GRAHAM

OSD/ISA: C.LLOYD

EUR/RPM: E.REHFELD

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O R 031930Z APR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 066995

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, NATO, BE

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SUBJECT: REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT FOR F-104

REF: BRUSSELS 457

1. IF THERE IS A SNAP BELGIAN DECISION IN FAVOR OF F-1 WITH M-53 ENGINE THIS WOULD APPEAR TO END THE HOPES OF EURO-GROUP CHAIRMAN FOSTERVOLL TO PROMOTE A CONSORTIUM OF FOUR NORTHERN COUNTRIES TO MAKE A COMMON CHOICE, SINCE NORWAY CLAIMS NO INTEREST IN FRENCH AIRCRAFT. WOULD APPRECIATE REPORT FROM OSLO WHETHER FOSTERVOLL, ON BASIS OF SOUNDINGS HIS STAFF TOOK IN MARCH, PLANS SEEK ANY COMMON MINISTERIAL MEETING THIS MONTH, AND ANY INDICATION WHETHER HE HAS SOME IDEA WHAT MAY BE BREWING IN BRUSSELS.

2. WE ALSO WONDER WHETHER IMPENDING CHANGES IN FRENCH POLITICS MAY LEAD BELGIANS TO HOLD OFF ANY DECISION UNTIL THEY SEE THE COMPLEXION OF THE NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT THAT WILL EMERGE SOMETIME NEXT MONTH. YOU MAY WISH TO MAKE THIS POINT.

3. THE CONSIDERATION HERE REMAINS THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS GONE AS FAR AS IT PROPERLY CAN IN THE FIRST ROUND OF LETTERS TO DEFENSE MINISTERS AND THE NEXT MOVE IS IN THE HANDS OF EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS (STATE 52479). WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING WHETHER BAF AND RNAF HAVE ARRANGED TO

OBSERVE CALIFORNIA TEST FLIGHTS OF YF-16 OR YF-17. WE CERTAINLY ENDORSE U.S. COMPANY INVITATIONS TO SUCH OBSERVERS.

4. WE ARE ALSO CONSIDERING DISCUSSION WITH THE BELGIANS HERE IN WASHINGTON. RUSH

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